

Message Text

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SUBJECT: LABOR UNITY DISAGREEMENTS CONFIRMED

REF: ROME'S 17247

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. THE DISAGREEMENT ON THE SUBJECT OF LABOR UNITY WAS CONFIRMED BY THE FINAL SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE FEDERATION CGIL-CISL-UIL (CCU). CONTINUED BICKERING ON THE SUBJECT LEFT LITTLE TIME TO FORMULATE UNITED LABOR POLICY FOR DEALING WITH THE NEW GOVERNMENT. INSTEAD, AGREEMENT WAS REACHED TO CONDUCT AN ADDITIONAL EIGHT HOURS OF STRIKES BY JANUARY 20. END SUMMARY.

2. ON THE THIRD AND FINAL DAY OF THE CCU EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING, THE UNIONS FAILED TO AGREE ON THE NATURE OF THEIR DISAGREEMENT. THE NINE-MAN COMMISSION, ESTABLISHED TO SYNTHESIZE THE CONFLICTING VIEWS WHICH EMERGED IN THE PREVIOUS TWO DAYS, FINALLY ISSUED TWO DOCUMENTS. THE VOTE ON THE MAJORITY DOCUMENT (EMBRACING THE VIEWPOINTS OF THE CGIL, MOST OF CISL AND THE UIL SOCIALISTS) WAS 61-14, WITH 15 NOTED AS "ABSENT." UNDER THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RULES THIS MEANS NO CCU POLICY ON FURTHER STEPS TOWARD ORGANIC

MERGER EMERGED FROM THE SESSION.

3. THE MINORITY DOCUMENT, INCORPORATING THE POSITION OF UIL SECRETARY GENERAL VANNI, DIVERGED ON THREE MAIN POINTS: (A) IT TOOK EXCEPTION TO THE PROPOSAL THAT VOTING BY CONFEDERATION BE ELIMINATED IN FAVOR OF HAVING EACH OF THE 90 MEMBERS VOTE INDIVIDUALLY, (B) IT DESCRIBED AS "BLAND" AND UNSATISFACTORY THE CRITERIA FOR AUTONOMY OF THE UNIONS FROM POLITICAL PARTIES, AND (C) IT DISAGREED WITH THE CALL FOR A PRECISE TIMETABLE FOR THE ACHIEVEMENT OF ORGANIC MERGER.

4. CISL CHIEF STORTI DELIVERED THE KEYNOTE REPORT ON THE DAY'S MAIN ORDER OF BUSINESS: LABOR STRATEGY FOR DEALING WITH THE NEW GOVERNMENT. THE REPORT MADE FOUR PRINCIPAL POINTS: (A) LABOR WELCOMES THE FORMATION OF THE MORO GOVERNMENT, THUS AVOIDING THE CALLING OF A GENERAL ELECTION, (B) THE UNIONS ARE MUCH CONCERNED ABOUT, AND FIND UNACCEPTABLE, THE GOVERNMENT'S STATED INTENTION, AS THEY INTERPRET IT, TO PUT OFF DEALING WITH THE RECESSION AND JOB SECURITY TO CONCENTRATE ON INFLATION, (C) LABOR WILL HAVE GREAT DIFFICULTY ACCEPTING MORO'S CEILING OF 16 PERCENT ON WAGE INCREASES BECAUSE NO CONCOMITANT LIMITS ARE SET ON PRICES AND PROFITS, AND (D) THE UNIONS INTEND TO DEAL WITH THE GOVERNMENT ON SPECIFIC, PRECISE ISSUES RATHER THAN ENGAGE IN DISCUSSIONS OF "GLOBAL SOLUTIONS."

5. THE CONTINUED WRANGLING ON THE UNITY ISSUE LEFT LITTLE TIME FOR DISCUSSION STORTI'S REPORT WHICH WAS REMANDED TO THE CCU SECRETARIAT FOR STUDY AND ELABORATION. INSTEAD, THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACCEPTED CGIL CHIEF LAMA'S PROPOSAL TO CONDUCT AN ADDITIONAL EIGHT HOURS OF STRIKES, TO BE SPREAD VARIOUSLY THROUGH THE REGIONS AND INDUSTRIES OF ITALY, BY JANUARY 20. IT WAS THE ONLY UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT OF THE THREE-DAY SESSION.

6. COMMENT: THE STRIKE DECISION AGAIN DEMONSTRATES THE PAUCITY OF IDEAS WITHIN THE ITALIAN LABOR MOVEMENT. BEFORE EVER THE GOVERNMENT WAS CONFIRMED (AND IT IS PROBABLY THE BEST POSSIBLE GOVERNMENT, FROM LABOR'S STANDPOINT, WHICH COULD HAVE EMERGED), IT WAS PRESENTED WITH AN EIGHT-HOUR NATIONAL GENERAL STRIKE. THE NEW STRIKE ACTIONS ARE NOW DECIDED BEFORE THE TALKS WITH THE NEW GOVERNMENT ARE FAIRLY UNDERWAY, INDEED, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BEFORE LABOR HAS EVEN DECIDED HOW TO CONDUCT THE TALKS. VOLPE

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